

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSC-01 PC-01 /068 W
----- 017128 /73

R 151435Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8046
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: N/A
SUBJECT: NEW CAE CABINET

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER ANGE PATASSE, WHO WAS CHOSEN BY BOKASSA LAST WEEK TO FORM THE EMPIRE'S FIRST GOVERNMENT, HAS SELECTED A TEAM WHICH IS BOTH SMALLER AND PROBABLY MORE CAPABLE THAN THE OUTGOING CABINET. THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER, HOWEVER, MAY NOT BE AS EASY TO DEAL WITH AS WAS HIS PREDECESSOR. END SUMMARY.

1. THE NEW GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED DECEMBER 14 INCLUDES 21 MEMBERS--DOWN FROM 31 IN THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT. PRIME MINISTER PATASSE HAS GIVEN UP DIRECT CONTROL OF ANY MINISTRIES HIMSELF.

2. OF THE MORE IMPORTANT FIGURES, ALPHONSE KOYAMBA MOVES UP FROM THIRD TO FIRST VICE PRIME MINISTER AND HAS FINANCE ADDED TO HIS PORTFOLIO OF THE PUBLIC TREASURY; HENRI MAIDOU CONTINUES AS SECOND VICE PRIME MINISTER WITH YOUTH, SPORTS AND CULTURE ADDED TO HIS EXISTING PORTFOLIO OF EDUCATION; ANDRE-DIEUDONNE MAGALE CONTINUES AS MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING (THEREBY SCOTCHING RUMORS OF HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE LATEST COUP PLOT); JOSEPH POTOLOT CONTINUES AS MINISTER OF STATE BUT NOW IN CHARGE OF JUSTICE; JEAN-ROBERT ZANA BECOMES MINISTER OF STATE AND HAS INTERIOR ADDED TO HIS PORTFOLIO OF NATIONAL DEFENSE; ANDRE-CHRISTIAN ZANA-FE TOUAM-BONA MOVES UP TO MINISTER OF STATE, STILL IN CHARGE OF THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF THE GOVERNMENT; AND JEAN-PAUL

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MOKODOPO, FORMERLY IN CHARGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH BECOMES MINISTER

OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

3. ADDITIONS TO THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL INCLUDE JEAN-PIERRE LEBOUDER, FORMERLY HEAD OF THE STATE COTTON OPERATION AND RECENT IVP GRANTEE, WHO BECOMES MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, GEORGES PINERT, FORMERLY THE PRESIDENT'S PHYSICIAN, WHO BECOMES MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, AND GUILLAUME MOKEMAT-KENGUEMBA, FORMER MIISTER AND MOST RECENTLY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PUBLIC WORKS, WHO BECOMES MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS.

4. THE DEPARTURES ARE MORE NUMEROUS. THEY INCLUDE: FRANCOIS GON, FORMER FIRST VICE PRIME MINISTER AND RUMORED AS INVOLVED IN THE LATEST COUP ATTEMPT; LOUIS ALAZOULA, FORMER MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF STATE CORPORATIONS: CLEMENT NGAI-VOUETO, FORMER MINISTER OF STAET FOR INTERIOR; MICHEL BANGUE-TANDET, FORMER MINISTER OF STATE CONTROLLING EXPENSES OF STATE PERSONNEL; JEAN SEBRI, FORMERLY MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF ARTISANS AND SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES, JOAQUIM DA-SILVA N'ZENGUE, FORMERLY MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF PARTY AFFAIRS; ANTONIO FRANCK, FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER; LOUIS-PIERRE GAMBA, FORMERLY IN CHARGE OF THE RADIO; AUGUSTIN DALLO-BEFIO, FORMERLY MINISTER OF JUSTICE; CLEMENT KOKPAVO, FORMERLY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE; JEAN-JACQUES SAGANZA, FORMERLY IN CHARGE OF THE STATE MOTOR POOL; CHRISTIAN LINGAMA-TOLEQUE, FORMERLY IN CHARGE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PRESSE; BERNARD BELOUM, FORMERLY MINISTER OF YOUTH & CULTURE; AND THEODORE-BLAISE LAMINE, FORMERLY MINISTER AT THE PRESIDENCY. (IN FACT MINISTERS WHO OCCUPIED STAFF FUNCTIONS, SUCH AS BANGUE-TANDET AND SAGANZA, MAY CONTINUE IN THE IMPERIAL ESTABLISHMENT BUT WITHOUT MINISTERIAL TITLES.)

5. COMMENT: OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT THE NEW CABINET MAY BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE OLD. SEVERAL INEFFECTUAL MINISTERS HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED, AND THOSE ADDED BRING REAL EXPERTISE TO THEIR NEW JOBS. FROM OUR OWN PAROCHIAL STANDPOINT, WE NOTE THAT THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER ONCE SERVED IN THE CAR EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AND SPEAKS A BIT OF ENGLISH. ON BALANCE, HOWEVER, WE DOUBT THAT HE WILL BE AS EASY TO WORK WITH AS WAS HIS PREDECESSOR. WE WILL SEND THE COMPLETE LIST OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AS SOON AS IT IS PUBLISHED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 DEC 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BANGUI02421
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760462-0273
From: BANGUI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761238/aaaabgxn.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW CAE CABINET SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER ANGE PATASSE, WHO WAS CHOSEN BY BOKASSA LAST WEEK TO FORM THE EMPIRE'S FIRST GO
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, CT, (PATASSE, ANGE), (BOKASSA, JEAN BEDEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006